

REMARKS

Claims 11-19 and 21-30 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 11 is amended and claim 30 is added. Support for the amendments to the claims and for new claim 30 may be found, for example, in the original claims and in the specification at paragraphs [0042] and [0043]. No new matter is added.

In view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

I. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103

A. Claim 11

The Office Action rejects claims 11-19 and 21-29 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,398,854 to Aonuma (herein "Aonuma"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

By this Amendment, claim 11 is amended to require "storing the aqueous solution of caustic soda and the aqueous solution of the reducing agent" after separately preparing these solutions and before mixing the solutions to obtain a mixed liquid.

Aonuma discloses "a so-called two-package type solution" system having (1) an ammoniac nitrate solution, and (2) a reducing solution. See column 2, lines 20-22. The Advisory Action acknowledges that Aonuma teaches preparing (2) the reducing solution by adding reducing agent and base component as solids to water to form a single aqueous solution. See Advisory Action, page 2, see also Aonuma, column 4, lines 57-60, column 5, lines 1-5, column 5, line 32 to column 6, line 4, column 11, lines 10-14, and column 12, lines 27-30. Accordingly, if Aonuma teaches or suggests anything with respect to storing the reducing agent and base component, Aonuma at most teaches or suggests storing the reducing agent and base component as solids, or storing the reducing solution comprising both the reducing agent and base component in a single aqueous solution.

For at least these reasons, claim 11 would not have been rendered obvious by Aonuma. Claims 12-19 and 21-29 variously depend from claim 11 and, thus, also would not have been rendered obvious by Aonuma. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

B. Claim 13

In addition, dependent claim 13 requires that "said ammoniacal silver salt aqueous solution is an ammoniacal silver carbonate aqueous solution" (emphasis added). Aonuma fails to teach or suggest an ammoniacal silver carbonate aqueous solution. Rather, Aonuma discloses "an ammoniac silver nitrate solution." See, e.g., abstract.

Thus, claim 13 would not have been rendered obvious by Aonuma for at least this reason and the other reasons discussed above with respect to claim 11. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection with respect to claim 13 are also respectfully requested for this reason.

II. New Claim

By this Amendment, new claim 30 is presented. New claim 30 recites the subject matter of claims 11 and 13 and, thus, distinguishes over the applied references for at least the same reasons discussed above with respect to claims 11 and 13. Accordingly, new claim 30 is believed to be patentable over the applied references. Prompt examination and allowance of new claim 30 is respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the application are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments:

Request for Continued Examination
Petition for Extension of Time

Date: March 30, 2009

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